REMARKS

Claim 20 has been amended as suggested by the Examiner to overcome the Examiner's objection under 35 U.S.C. §101. Claims 1, 4 to 7 and 10 to 30 are pending in the application and are believed to distinguish patentably over the prior art.

In the Official Action, the Examiner has rejected claim 15 under 35 U.S.C. §112 alleging that this claim is indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the Applicant regards as the invention. In particular, the Examiner is alleging that there is insufficient antecedent basis for the limitation "improvement" in this claim. Applicant respectfully submits that the Examiner's objection in this regard is inappropriate. Claim 15 is in the common Jepson format. This claim format is widely accepted. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to remove this objection.

With respect to prior art, the Examiner has rejected claims 1, 4 to 7, 14 to 19, 27, 29 and 30 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,411,685 to O'Neal ("O'Neal") in view of Visible Decision's Discovery for Developers ("VDDD"). The Examiner is alleging that the Applicant's invention as defined by these claims would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art in view of the combined teachings of these references.

Claims 20 to 26 have been rejected by the Examiner under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Microsoft Windows 98 Paint or over VDDD. The Examiner is alleging that the Applicant's invention as defined by these claims would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art in view of the teachings of either of these references.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for allowing claims 28 and 10 to 13. Applicant however, respectfully submits that the Examiner's objections to the claims in view of the cited references are inappropriate for the reasons set forth below.

At the onset, Applicant wishes to advise the Examiner that O'Neal is not citable as prior art against the present application. The present application was filed on May 13, 1999 but claims priority on earlier U.K. Patent Application No. 9810422.7 filed on May 14, 1998. In accordance with the revised statute 35 U.S.C. §104 effective to applications filed after January 1, 1996, the present application is entitled to a date of invention that predates the cited O'Neal reference. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that the Examiner's objection in view of the O'Neal and VDDD references should be removed.

As stated previously, VDDD discloses a generic framework for constructing three-dimensional information visualizations for the world of business including retailers to enable marketing managers to use graphical representations to gain a

better understanding of customers' buying habits; and traders to enable market trends to be visualized and risk analysis to be visualized. No specific applications of three-dimensional information visualizations are disclosed.

According to the Applicant's invention as defined by independent claim 1, Applicant provides a communications system comprising a network and a plurality of applications connected to the network. Each of the applications handles a different type of communication and stores information concerning incoming communications directed to users of the communications system. At least one computer is connected to the network and receives incoming communications information from selected applications. The at least one computer includes a display and a processor executing a view application. The view application processes the incoming communications information and generates a three-dimensional representation thereof for presentation on the display. The three-dimensional representation is a graphical representation including first, second and third generally orthogonal axes. The first axis denotes different types of incoming communications, the second axis denotes numbers of incoming communications and the third axis denotes categories of incoming communications within the different types of incoming communications. Objects representing different types and categories of incoming communications appear on the graphical representation. By providing a view application that displays incoming communications in such a

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graphical manner, a user is able to determine at a glance (i.e. quickly and effectively) how many of each different type of incoming communication the user has received.

Applicant respectfully submits that VDDD alone fails to teach or suggest the Applicant's invention as claimed. In view of the above, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1, 4 to 7, 14 to 19, 27, 29 and 30 distinguish over the prior art and should be allowed.

According to the Applicant's invention as defined by independent claim 20, Applicant provides a view application program, stored in a computable readable medium, executable by a computer for displaying different types of incoming communications. The view application program comprises computer program code for causing the computer to display a window on a monitor of the computer and computer program code for causing the computer to display a user defined landscape within the window. The landscape is in the form of a graph presenting objects representing the different types of incoming communications. The graph includes first, second and third generally orthogonal axes. The first axis denotes different types of incoming communications, the second axis denotes numbers of incoming communications and the third axis denotes categories of incoming communications within the different types.

The Examiner contends that the Applicant's invention as defined by this claim would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art in view of Microsoft Windows 98 Paint or VDDD. Contrary to the Examiner's allegations, Applicant respectfully submits that the Examiner has not established a prima facia case of obviousness. Such a case must meet three (3) basic criteria. In particular, there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference or to combine reference teachings, there must be a reasonable expectation of success, and the prior art reference, or references when combined, must teach or suggest all claim limitations.

Microsoft Windows 98 Paint cited by the Examiner simply discloses a paint application including a pallet in which a user can draw. The paint application in no way displays different types of incoming communications in a three-dimensional manner as defined. As mentioned above, VDDD simply discloses a generic framework for constructing three-dimensional information but fails to disclose any specific application. The cited references fail to teach or suggest the cited claim limitations. To suggest otherwise clearly extends beyond the teachings of the cited prior art and the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art.

Applicant respectfully submits that a prima facia case of obviousness has not been established. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner's objections to claims 20 to 26 are inappropriate and should be removed.

In view of the above, it is believed the application is in order for allowance and action to that end is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,
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